

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The final Office Action dated April 14, 2009 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 12, and 19 are hereby amended. Claims 9, 11, 16, 18, and 22 were previously cancelled. No claims are added. Accordingly, claims 1-8, 10, 12-15, 17, and 19-21 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 2 and 6 are objected to for informalities noted therein. *Office Action* at p. 2, ¶ 2. Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Office, however, in an effort to advance the application to allowance, Applicants have amended claims 2 and 6, and respectfully request that the Office withdraw this objection.

Claims 1-8, 12-15, 17, and 19-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2003/0065824 to Kudo et al. (hereinafter “*Kudo*”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,366,583 to Rowett et al. (hereinafter “*Rowett*”). *Office Action* at p. 2, ¶ 4. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and request reconsideration.

Independent claim 1 is allowable over *Kudo* in view of *Rowett* in that claim 1 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “a second interface module including a second universal asynchronous receiver and transmitter connected to the first universal asynchronous receiver through a serial interface for serial communication.” As admitted by the Office, “*Kudo* does not expressly disclose the interface apparatus comprises: a first interface module including a first universal asynchronous receiver and transmitter; and a second interface module including a second universal asynchronous receiver and transmitter connected to the first universal asynchronous receiver.” *Office Action* at p. 3. Thus, *Kudo* does not teach or suggest all of the features of claim 1.

Rowett fails to cure the deficiencies of *Kudo*. The Office asserts that *Rowett* “discloses in Fig. 2 an interface apparatus [element 52]” where “[e]lement 52 also discloses that the first UART is connected to the second UART.” *Office Action* at p. 3. The Office relies on

column 4, lines 55-67 of *Rowett* to support this assertion. *Rowett*, however, discloses “[i]nterface circuitry coupled to the internal bus and integrated onto the silicon chip include dual UARTs 52.” *Rowett* at col. 4:44-46 and Fig. 2. As shown, “[t]he UARTs 52 are coupled to the console 82 and an auxiliary port.” *Rowett* col. 4:65-66. Thus, *Rowett*’s dual UARTs are respectively coupled to a console 82 and an auxiliary port, but not to each other “through a serial interface for serial communication,” as recited in independent claim 1. In fact, *Rowett* is entirely silent as to any teaching or suggestion concerning “a second interface module including a second universal asynchronous receiver and transmitter connected to the first universal asynchronous receiver through a serial interface for serial communication,” as recited in independent claim 1. Accordingly, none of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests all of the features as recited in independent claim 1.

Independent claim 12 is allowable over *Kudo* in view of *Rowett* in that claim 12 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “a second interface module based on the control protocol connected to the first interface module ..., wherein the second interface module includes a second universal asynchronous receiver and transmitter connected to the first universal asynchronous receiver and transmitter through a serial interface for serial communication.” Nothing in *Kudo* or *Rowett* teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. Hence, for the same or similar reasons discussed above regarding claim 1, Applicants respectfully assert that *Kudo* and *Rowett*, singly or in combination, fail to teach or suggest at least the above-recited feature of claim 12, and respectfully submit that independent claim 12 is allowable over *Kudo* in view of *Rowett*.

Independent claim 19 is allowable over *Kudo* in view of *Rowett* in that claim 19 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “a second interface module based on a control protocol connected to the first interface module ..., wherein the second interface module includes a second universal asynchronous receiver and transmitter connected to the first universal asynchronous receiver and transmitter through a serial interface for serial communication.” Nothing in *Kudo* or *Rowett* teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. Hence, for the same or similar reasons discussed above regarding claim 1, Applicants respectfully assert that *Kudo* and *Rowett*, singly or in combination, fail to teach or suggest at least the above feature of claim 19, and respectfully submit that independent claim 19 is allowable over *Kudo* or *Rowett*, singly or in combination.

For at least the above-recited reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of independent claims 1, 12, and 19. Claims 2-8 depend from independent claim 1; claims 13-15 and 17 depend from independent claim 12; and claims 20 and 21 depend from independent claim 19. It stands to reason that the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of those dependent claims should be withdrawn as well.

CONCLUSION

The application is in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

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Respectfully submitted,

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